

§ 421.316

even though a conflict of interest exists.

§ 421.316 Limitation on Medicare integrity program contractor liability.

(a) A MIP contractor, a person or an entity employed by, or having a fiduciary relationship with, or who furnishes professional services to a MIP contractor is not in violation of any criminal law or civilly liable under any law of the United States or of any State (or political subdivision thereof) by reason of the performance of any duty, function, or activity required or authorized under this subpart or under a valid contract entered into under this subpart, provided due care was exercised in that performance and the contractor has a contract with CMS under this subpart.

(b) CMS pays a contractor, a person or an entity described in paragraph (a) of this section, or anyone who furnishes legal counsel or services to a contractor or person, a sum equal to the reasonable amount of the expenses, as determined by CMS, incurred in connection with the defense of a suit, action, or proceeding, if the following conditions are met:

(1) The suit, action, or proceeding was brought against the contractor, such person or entity by a third party and relates to the contractor's, person's or entity's performance of any duty, function, or activity under a contract entered into with CMS under this subpart.

(2) The funds are available.

(3) The expenses are otherwise allowable under the terms of the contract.

Subpart E—Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs)

SOURCE: 71 FR 68229, Nov. 24, 2006, unless otherwise noted.

§ 421.400 Statutory basis and scope.

(a) *Statutory basis.* This subpart implements section 1874A of the Act, which provides for the transition of the claims processing functions and operations for both Medicare Part A and Part B intermediaries and carriers to Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs). The transition will occur between October 1, 2005, and October 1,

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2011. MACs will be fully operational in distinct, nonoverlapping geographic jurisdictions by October 1, 2011.

(b) *Scope.* This subpart specifies the requirements under which providers and suppliers will be assigned to MACs.

§ 421.401 Definitions.

For purposes of this subpart—

Appropriate MAC means a MAC that has a contract under section 1874A of the Act to perform a particular Medicare administrative function in relation to:

(1) A particular individual entitled to benefits under Part A or enrolled under Part B, or both;

(2) A specific provider of services or supplier; or

(3) A class of providers of services or suppliers.

Medicare Administrative Contractor (MAC) means an agency, organization, or other person with a contract under section 1874A of the Act.

§ 421.404 Assignment of providers and suppliers to MACs.

(a) *Definitions.* As used in this section—

Chain provider means a group of two or more providers under common ownership or control.

Common control exists when an individual, a group of individuals, or an organization has the power, directly or indirectly, to significantly influence or direct the actions or policies of the group of suppliers or eligible providers.

Common ownership exists when an individual, a group of individuals, or an organization possesses significant equity in the group of suppliers or eligible providers.

Durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies (DMEPOS) means the types of services specified in § 421.210(b).

Eligible provider means a hospital, skilled nursing facility, or critical access hospital that meets the definition of a provider under § 400.202 of this chapter.

Home office means the entity that provides centralized management and administrative services to the individual providers or suppliers under common ownership and common control, such as centralized accounting,

purchasing, personnel services, management direction and control, and other similar services.

Ineligible provider means a provider under §400.202 of this chapter that is not an eligible provider.

Medicare benefit category means a category of covered benefits under Part A or Part B of the Medicare program (for example, inpatient hospital services, post-hospital extended care services, and physicians' services).

Provider has the same meaning as specified under §400.202 of this chapter.

Qualified chain provider means a chain provider comprised of—

(1) 10 or more eligible providers collectively totaling 500 or more certified beds; or

(2) 5 or more eligible providers collectively totaling 300 or more certified beds, with eligible providers in 3 or more contiguous States.

Supplier has the same meaning as specified in §400.202 of this chapter.

(b) *Assignment of providers to MACs.* (1) Providers enroll with and receive Medicare payment and other Medicare services from the MAC contracted by CMS to administer claims for the Medicare benefit category applicable to the provider's covered services for the geographic locale in which the provider is physically located.

(2) Qualified chain providers may request and receive an exception from the requirement of paragraph (b)(1) of this section from CMS. Upon CMS' approval, a qualified chain provider may enroll with and bill on behalf of the eligible providers under its common ownership or common control to the MAC contracted by CMS to administer claims for the Medicare benefit category applicable to the eligible providers' covered services for the geographic locale in which the qualified chain provider's home office is physically located.

(3) As MAC contractors become available, qualified chain providers, granted approval by CMS to enroll with and bill a single intermediary on behalf of their eligible member providers prior to October 1, 2005, will be assigned at an appropriate time to the MAC contracted by CMS to administer claims for the applicable Medicare benefit category for the geographic locale in which the

chain provider's home office is physically located. The qualified chain provider will not need to request an exception to the requirement of paragraph (b)(1) of this section in order for this assignment to take effect.

(4) CMS may grant an exception to the requirement of paragraph (b)(1) of this section to eligible providers that are not under the common ownership or common control of a qualified chain provider, as well as ineligible providers, only if CMS finds the exception will support the implementation of MACs or will serve some other compelling interest of the Medicare program.

(c) *Assignment of suppliers to MACs.* (1) Suppliers, including physicians and other practitioners, but excluding suppliers of DMEPOS, enroll with and receive Medicare payment and other Medicare services from the MAC contracted by CMS to administer claims for the Medicare benefit category applicable to the supplier's covered services for the geographic locale in which the supplier furnished such services.

(2) Suppliers of DMEPOS receive Medicare payment and other Medicare services from the MAC assigned to administer claims for DMEPOS for the regional area in which the beneficiary receiving the DMEPOS resides. The terms of §§421.210 and 421.212 continue to apply to suppliers of DMEPOS.

(3) CMS may allow a group of ESRD suppliers under common ownership and common control to enroll with the MAC contracted by CMS to administer ESRD claims for the geographic locale in which the group's home office is located only if—

(i) The group of ESRD suppliers requests such privileges; and

(ii) CMS finds the exception will support the implementation of MACs or will serve some other compelling interest of the Medicare program.

Subpart F [Reserved]

PART 422—MEDICARE ADVANTAGE PROGRAM

Subpart A—General Provisions

Sec.

422.1 Basis and scope.

422.2 Definitions.